# ART EXHIBITION CATALOGUES REPUBLISHED ON MICROFICHE

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**Some text and illustrations are lost through tight binding. This is a problem which we regret we have found unavoidable since we are only filming at the Victoria and Albert Museum those catalogues that cannot be found in other London locations.**

78.N.

# BECKMANN

CURT VALENTIN GALLERY

# MAX BECKMANN

*January 26 – February 20, 1954*

CURT VALENTIN GALLERY

32 EAST 57 STREET · NEW YORK

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FRIENDS have asked me to say something during this reunion about Art. Should one embark again on the discussion of this old theme which never arrives at a satisfactory conclusion because everyone can speak only for himself. Particularly the artist who, after all, can never escape his calling. Isn't it much nicer to go for a walk and experience the new, young dream of spring instead of getting entangled in dry theories or arriving at inconclusive results?

Indulge in your subconscious, or intoxicate yourself with wine, for all I care, love the dance, love joy and melancholy, and even death! Yes, also death—as the final transition to the Great Unknown. But above all you should love, love and love! Do not forget that every man, every tree and every flower is an individual worth thorough study and portrayal.

And when you ask me again *how* should I make this study and portrayal, I can only tell you again that in Art everything is a matter of dis-

*Cover: Detail of Cat. No. 17*

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crimination, address and sensibility, regardless of whether it is modern or not. Ever important is keen awareness and uncompromising self-criticism. The work must emanate truth, Truth through love of nature and iron self-discipline.

If you really have something to say, it will always be evident; therefore do not shy away from tears, from despair and the torment of hard work, for in spite of it all, there is no deeper satisfaction than to have accomplished something good, and therefore it is worth your while to sweat a bit.

This is all that might be said about painting. I do believe however, that this very problem applies to all the arts and sciences. Purposely I have avoided commenting on the art theories as I am a sworn enemy of putting art in categories. Personally, I think it is high time to put an end

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to all "Isms," and to leave to the individual the decision whether a picture is beautiful, bad or boring. Not with your ears shall you see but with your eyes.

Greatness can be achieved in every form of art; it depends alone on the fertile imagination of the individual to discover this. Therefore I say not only to the artist but also to the beholder: if you love nature with all your heart, new and unimaginable things in Art will occur to you. Because Art is nothing but the transfiguration of nature.

Manhattan's skyscrapers nodded reflectively to my thoughts—some of them reared themselves even prouder than before. Right, they said, right — we too have become nature. Man-made — But grown above man — and slowly they have vanished in the warm gray mist of a spring evening.

Art, with religion and the sciences, has always supported and liberated man on his path. Art resolves through Form the many paradoxes of life, and sometimes permits us to glimpse behind the dark curtain which hides those spaces unknown and where one day we shall be unified.

MAX BECKMANN

(Written for the Washington University, St. Louis . . . )

Translation by Jane Sabersky

## BLINDMAN'S BUFF

**The Triptych *Blindman's Buff* was painted during the winter of 1944/45 in Amsterdam, Holland, and the German occupation. The following notes are excerpts from Beckmann's diary.**

*January 3* *. . . quite intensively again on right panel of Triptyc, invented pink stockings. . . .*

*January 6* *For the first time worked in room downstairs because of the cold.*

*January 10* *. . . in the morning quite a lot on the left panel of the Triptyc.*

*January 16* *The two panels for the "large Cabaret." Painted left kneeling woman with red stockings, young man (centre panel) holds a candle, am quite satisfied.*

*January 29* *Intensively, though not well on the left main figure—worked on left panel (room temperature 40 degrees)—and else—5 below freezing and no heat—and miserable food . . .*

*March 31* *. . . this afternoon started with determination on the centre panel of the "large Bar" and quite well.*

*May 6* *. . . for six hours on the new "Cabaret-Triptyc" . . .*

*May 23* *. . . fussed around all day on "Cabaret"—towards evening with some success.*

*May 26* *. . . devised the wooden structure in the large "Cabaret."*

*June 5* *Worked fiercely on the large centre panel, first try at fourth figure in background. Am tired out.*

*June 7* *Again centre panel, devised upper right figure.*

*June 16* *To be stated that after four hours work in the morning the centre panel of "Cabaret Grand" has taken on its final form. That encourages me.*

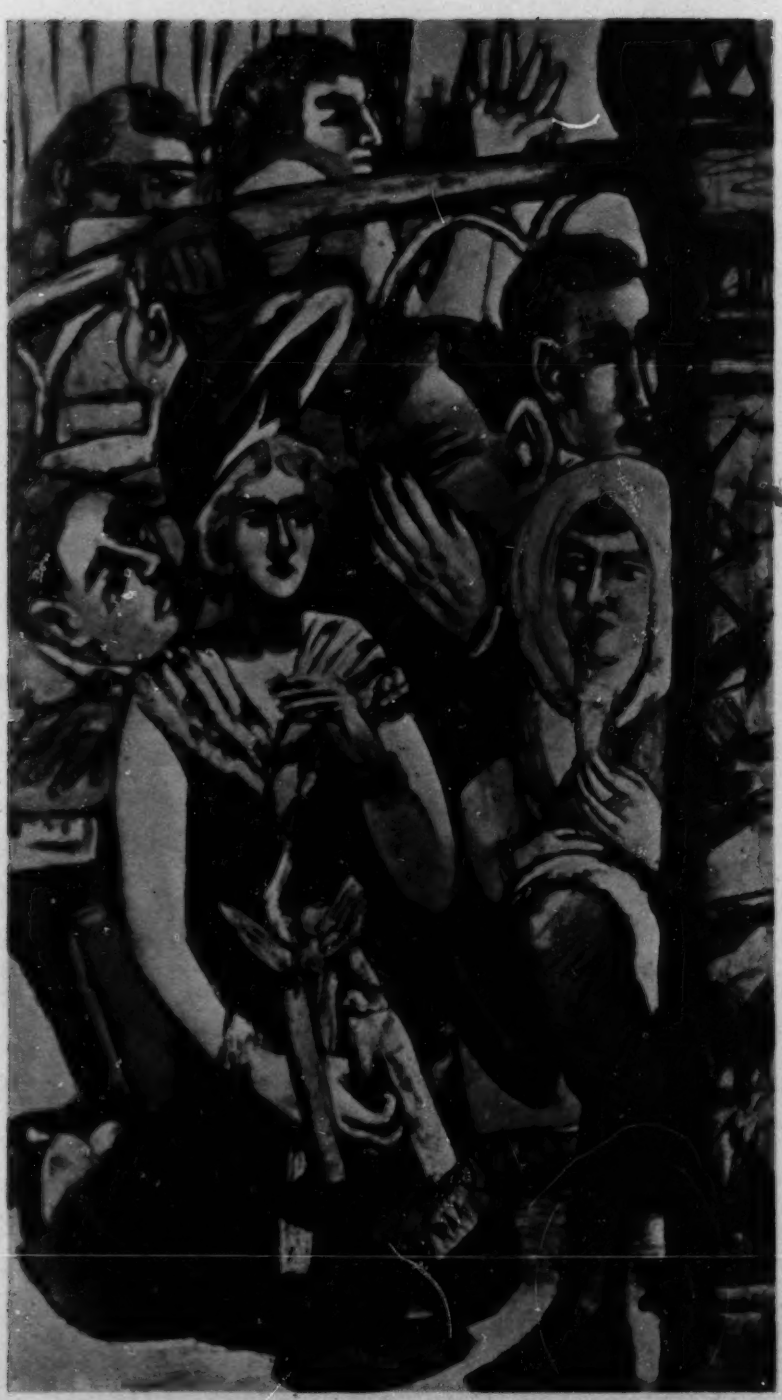
*July 1* *Very intensively and "magnificently" on the centre panel of that big ox-picture. Am certain it's going to be my outstanding painting.*

*July 7* *. . . worked three hours very well (Minotaur in dinner-jacket) on the big ox-painting.*

*July 17* *Centre panel of "large ox-painting" completed in raw outline.*

*July 22* *Quite happy, during five hours at last final version of main figure right panel.*

*July 25* *Worked 8-10 hours . . . morning and afternoon, but it was beautiful. Completely finished left-panel-man of ox-painting.*



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|---|---|
| *July 28* | *. . . still 8-10 hours work . . . but am not satisfied with centre panel.* |
| *July 29* | *Dog-tired, again five hours on Triptyc . . . (almost finished).* |
| *August 1* | *Changed head of harp-player . . .* |
| *August 2* | *. . . spent whole afternoon and evening on harp-player (still not quite satisfied).* |
| *August 3* | *At last centre panel of "large Cabaret" finished except for some polishing! May be now I can rest a little . . .* |
| *August 6* | *. . . even though five hours work on "Blind Man's Buff-Triptyc" (on the whole picture). Tomorrow again.* |
| *August 7* | *Worked again for seven hours on all three pictures.* |
| *August 11* | *"Blind Man's Buff" near completion. At last finished left-panel-woman.* |
| *August 13* | *. . . four hours "Blind Man's Buff"—a little too much. . . .* |
| *August 17* | *Well, at last finished with that "Blind Man's Buff"!* |

Translation by Jane Sabersky

LIBRARY

# CATALOGUE

*Oils*

1 SCHEVENINGEN
1930. 37½ x 14″

2 STILL LIFE WITH MASK
1931. 23½ x 11¾″

3 STILL LIFE "BATHTUB"
1932. 25¾ x 10¼″
(Finished 1950)

4 FILM STUDIO
1933. 25½ x 37½″

5 THE GREEN ROBE
1934. 55½ x 28½″

6 WOMEN AT THE BATH
1935. 53 x 39¼″

7 TIGHTROPE DANCER
1936. 39 x 28″

8 THE KITCHEN
1936. 43 x 26″

9 STILL LIFE WITH TELESCOPE AND VEILED FIGURE
1938. 43¼ x 27½″

10 TWO WOMEN AT THE BEACH
1938. 23¾ x 31″

11 APACHE DANCERS
1938. 67½ x 59½″

12 ZANVOORT WITH CAT AND FLOWERS
1939. 25½ x 43½″

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[16]

[9]

[01]

13 CAP ST. MARTIN
1939. 36¼ x 29"

14 GIRL WITH GLASS AND SHELL
1939. 19¾ x 31½"

15 MONACO
1939. 35½ x 23½"

16 STILL LIFE AND DRESSING TABLE
1940. 35½ x 27¾"

17 BLINDMAN'S BUFF (*triptych*)
1945.
Center panel: 81 x 90"
Side panels: 75½ x 43¼"

18 THE ACTRESSES
1946. 65 x 47½"

19 BIRD'S HELL
1947. 47 x 63"

20 STILL LIFE WITH ORCHID
1948. 33½ x 21½"

21 CHRIST IN LIMBO
1948. 30½ x 42½"

22 STILL LIFE WITH PIGEONS
1950. 40 x 50"

23 STILL LIFE WITH MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
1950. 36 x 55"

## *Drawings and Prints*

*Note:* The Paintings catalogue Nr. 1-8 were painted in Berlin, Nr. 9-12, 14-20 in Amsterdam, Nr. 13 in Paris, Nr. 21 in St. Louis, Nr. 22-23 in New York.